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The 10th National People's Congress and After

Moving Towards a New Authoritarianism – Both Elitist and Consultative?

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NOTE DE L'ÉDITEUR

Translated from the French original by Philip Liddell

- 1 The meeting in March this year of the 10th National People's Congress (NPC) confirmed the decisions and leadership changes approved last November by the 16th Party Congress. Four months after the delegates at the Party Congress had confirmed the smooth handover of power from the “third to the fourth generation” of Chinese leaders, the Party leadership promoted to the head of its “state façade” a new group of leaders. As expected, Hu Jintao replaced Jiang Zemin as President of the republic, Wen Jiabao succeeded Zhu Rongji as Prime Minister and Jiang stayed on as president of the powerful Central Military Commission of the state (and the Party). At the same time, the political and economic objectives approved at the Party Congress were translated into government decisions. Here again, the continuity of direction is more important than the changes, despite perceptible adjustments since last summer aimed, in the main, at preventing social unrest and thus at stabilising both society and the political regime. No real political reform was announced, while the attention of the new leaders remained focused upon economic restructuring. In particular, loss-making state enterprises were progressively to be dismantled; the Chinese economy was to be adapted to the international environment within which it is gradually becoming integrated; social inequalities were to be managed and, if possible, reduced; and the legal and institutional frameworks in which the country is developing were to be modernised.
- 2 This NPC meeting and more generally the aftermath of the 16th Party Congress were marked in particular by the Iraq War, the spreading epidemic of “atypical pneumonia”,

or SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), in China, and the North Korean crisis. For all that, did they achieve anything new? Did they not help to reinforce institutional and political trends that have been developing for one, or even two, decades? This change of generation, and the early challenges that the new team has had to confront, might they not favour a gradual relaxation of China's authoritarian system? Might they allow, if not the democratisation of the regime, at least the establishment of a more open form of authoritarianism? Could this not be characterised both by a profound elitism and also by consultative mechanisms that no regime of the Soviet type ever managed to put in place? In short, can authoritarianism be institutionalised?

- 3 These questions are far-reaching and, clearly, go beyond the scope of this article. Yet, we may be helped in measuring some of these developments by examining the course of the recent plenary session of the NPC (March 5th to 18th 2003) and of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC, March 3rd to 14th 2003) as well as the new distribution of responsibilities among the country's top leaders. This study may also enable us to understand the rivalries and divisions among Party leaders and within the Chinese state. Thereby, we may attempt to foresee the political changes that may lie ahead over the coming years.

The meetings of the NPC and the CPPCC

- 4 In many respects, the first plenary session of the 10th NPC unfolded as have previous such sessions. This year again, the NPC was composed of central and local delegates chosen by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP); for two weeks it served as a sounding board for the various economic and social problems that the country is experiencing. And, as a new legislature was taking over, this session of the NPC concentrated on electing the state's new leaders, lending a less attentive ear to the various work reports presented to them (on the government, the NPC, the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate).
- 5 And, following institutional practice at the start of each new legislature, the first plenary session of the 10th NPC was preceded in February by a plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the CCP appointed during the recent Party Congress. This meeting formally approved the "candidates" for the various available government posts "recommended" (tuijian) by the Party, together with the agenda for this session.
- 6 Similarly, the 2,985 new delegates' qualifications are hardly any different from those of their predecessors: the relative proportions of the various "socio-political" groups represented remain virtually unchanged (see Table 1). The largest grouping is still made up of cadres (32%), that is to say, the Party and state leaders at provincial and infra-provincial levels; "intellectuals" make up the next biggest grouping (21%) while "workers and peasants" (18%), delegated in the main by state enterprises and village committees, are still significantly under-represented. It is the same for women, who lose 44 deputies and whose place within the leading circles of the Party, as the 16th Congress has shown, is at best modest (the only woman sitting in the Politburo is Wu Yi, of whom more anon). By contrast, the People's Liberation Army (PLA), estimated to number 2.3 million people, is still generously over-represented: it provides 268 delegates, a number amounting to one deputy for every 8,582 soldiers, as against an average of one deputy for every 435,511 citizens and one deputy for every 1.08 million women! Reflecting Hu Jintao's declared wish for openness towards non-communists, the only noteworthy development is the rather modest increase (480 as against 460) in the number of delegates from "democratic parties", groupings distinct from but closely

affiliated to the CCP, and from no party (wudangpai), those people formerly known as “fellow-travellers” of the Communist Party¹. Yet, this new tendency harks back only timidly to a policy abandoned in 1998: in fact, this group made up 19.2% of the deputies in 1993 (572). Moreover, most of the remaining deputies belong to the CCP, although the exact proportion of communists has not been published since the Ninth NPC (in 1993, at the time of the Eighth NPC, 68.4% of deputies were Party members)².

Table 1: The Membership of the 9th and the 10th NPCs (1998-2003)

	9th NPC (1998-2003)		10th NPC (2003-2008)	
	Members	%	Membres	%
Workers & Farmers	563	18.89	551	18.46
Intellectuals	628	21.07	631	21.14
Cadres	988	33.16	968	32.44
Members of democratic parties and non-partisan patriots	460	15.44	480	16.09
PLA	268	8.99	268	8.98
Hong Kong residents	35	1.21	36	1.21
Macau residents	12	0.4	12	0.4
Taiwan residents	13	0.44	13	0.44
Returned overseas Chinese	37	1.24	38	1.27
National minorities	428	14.36	415	13.91
Women	650	21.81	604	20.24

NB: in 1998, the total number of delegates was 2,979. The twelve Macau representatives were not included in this number since Macau was still under Portuguese administration. However, five of them were then Guangdong delegates. Between 2000 and 2003, the total number of delegates has been 2,986.

Source: Wenhuiabao, March 3rd 2003, p.A6.

- 7 On the face of it, then, this first meeting of the 10th NPC is no different from the Ninth (1998) or the Eighth (1993).
- 8 Nevertheless, some developments may be noted reflecting a greater acceptance of deputies' independence and bringing to light the rivalries that divide the Chinese leadership. First of all, we may wonder whether the system for selecting deputies has not gradually opened up and whether, because of this, rather than offering better representation to Chinese society, the NPC has not in reality become more elitist. We may wonder too whether the greater—and still quite modest—autonomy that the People's Congresses enjoy, far from having lessened that tendency, has on the contrary accentuated it.
- 9 It is clear that, though formally elected by People's Congresses at the provincial level, the members of the NPC are still chosen by the Central Department of the Organisation of the Communist Party, with the help of the authorities of the province that they represent (or of the PLA). Thus, because they had to belong to the NPC in order to be elected state leaders, Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao and Zeng Qinghong had themselves elected, each in one of the 31 provincial level constituencies of their choice (Shanghai, Tibet and Jiangxi, respectively). Similarly, those representing these constituencies in the NPC are mostly provincial leaders of the CCP, of the government and of the local people's congress. At the local level also (counties, villages), numerous examples show that these elections are often no more open than formerly to citizens lacking connections in the system but wishing to take up the openings offered to them by the law—according to which anyone supported by ten electors may stand as a candidate³.

The greater say that congresses have in government has generally resulted in strengthening the CCP's grip over the congresses. Thus, 23 of the 31 provincial congresses are headed by the secretaries of the Party's provincial committees. Only the most developed cities and regions (Peking, Shanghai, Tianjin, Guangdong, Hubei and Heilongjiang) and certain non-Chinese minority areas (Xinjiang, Tibet), for different reasons, have not experienced this pattern⁴.

- 10 Yet, while the NPC delegates are selected for their loyalty to the regime, they are chosen also on the basis of their high education level (in 1998, more than 80% of them were university graduates, as against 69% in 1993; in 2003 no statistical data was published), of their professional skills or of the recognition that the regime, following Jiang Zemin's theory of the "three representations", seeks to give to certain social groups. It is no surprise that a greater number of private entrepreneurs or, rather, "people involved in the non-public economy" (*feigongyouzhi jingji renshi*) are now members of the NPC (133 as against 48 in 1998)⁵. What is more, in a growing number of regions, because of the greater share that the local people's congresses take in the affairs of government, being elected to these authorities has become a real political lever both for the regime's "traditional elites" (Party and state officials, heads of enterprises and public establishments) and for members of the "new elites", who are sometimes willing to spend substantial sums of money to ensure victory at the polls⁶. Although the CCP continues to screen the election (or promotion) of these deputies to congresses at higher levels, it is also more and more sensitive to deputies' economic muscle and thus to the contribution, particularly financial, that they may bring to the collectivity.
- 11 The consequence of these developments is the increasingly urban and elitist character of the NPC. According to Hu Angang, city-dwellers are four times better represented than people living in the countryside (one delegate for every 960,000 country people as against one for every 260,000 city-dwellers). And the proportion of workers and peasants has dropped from 54% during the 1950s to 19%⁷. As formerly, delegates to the NPC embody an idealised form of political society, one designed more on the model of priorities set by the communist leadership of the moment than on that of China's social realities. And the changing criteria for selection have not reduced the NPC's elitist character. On the contrary, we may be tempted to advance the hypothesis—one that only an in-depth sociological study of the deputies, still a difficult task to carry out, could confirm—that the evolution of deputies' selection criteria and the NPC's relatively growing power have helped to make it more elitist than at the start of the Deng Xiaoping era, when its deputies were less educated, more rural, often survivors of the Cultural Revolution and, above all, less well off economically.
- 12 Even so, these elites do not form, politically or socially, a consistent group. While the majority of deputies still belong to the regime's "traditional elites" (Party officials, PLA officers, workers and model peasants), a probably growing minority represents what one would be tempted to call the "new elites"⁸. And this hybrid mixture masks other divisions, ones that are more political or based on conflicts of economic interests that have to a certain extent manifested themselves during the leadership elections and that tend to put into perspective the stability of the socio-political groups represented in the NPC.

Election surprises

- 13 In mid-March, seven state institutions saw their new leaders confirmed in power: the NPC, the presidency of the People's Republic, the Central Military Commission, the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate, the State Council and the CPPCC. The first six sets of appointments were ratified on the basis of a vote by all of the NPC deputies. The election procedure remained unaltered: a single candidate, the one proposed by the Party, was put forward for election. So the question was not whether a leader would be elected or not, but whether he would be more or less well elected. The only exception, as has been usual since 1988, was again the NPC's Standing Committee, an authority for which the number of candidates was slightly above the number of available posts (167 candidates competing for 159 posts). Nevertheless, this "unequal number election" (cha'e xuanju), as before, did not include the NPC's president, its 15 vice-presidents and its Secretary General, who also sit on the Standing Committee (whose total number went up to 175 members as against 155 in 1998⁹).
- 14 These decision-making mechanisms, finely controlled as they were, came up with some surprises. Firstly, it is interesting to note a development for which there is no known precedent: the election procedure itself was rejected by 34 deputies while 64 others abstained (2,795 delegates approved it)¹⁰. Further, for the first time, during the vote, deputies were authorised to write an additional name on their ballot papers, an opportunity that a handful of them actually did grasp¹¹.
- 15 And, most importantly, the overall message of the delegates was clear: the candidates close to Jiang Zemin were badly elected whereas Hu Jintao's supporters were, on the whole, elected with overwhelming majorities. This reflected the wish of most of China's "official elites" to see the torch passed more quickly to the "fourth generation" and in particular the powers of the "Shanghai group" (Shanghaibang) and the "Jiang Zemin faction" (Jiangjiaban) curtailed. Will their wishes be granted?

Changing the leadership of the NPC

- 16 Few were surprised at the choice of Li Peng's successor as NPC Chairman: as has become usual since 1993, this function is exercised by the number two leader of the CCP. So it was Wu Bangguo, a former Shanghai boss (1991-1995) then deputy prime minister and associate of Jiang, who was promoted, rather than Li Ruihuan, chairman of the CPPCC and favoured candidate up until last October, when he was forced into premature retirement because of his open opposition to Jiang (see below). However, despite Wu's political leanings, the deputies gave him massive support, no doubt because of the regime's real popularity among the official elites and also in consideration of the powers, after all quite limited, that the NPC president can wield¹². Even so, two deputies preferred Zhu Rongji and one other voted for Li Peng¹³. By contrast, Li Tieying, too closely associated with the now past era of Deng Xiaoping and criticised for his very conservative management of the Academy of Social Sciences, was almost as badly elected (93.21%) as Ding Shisun, president of the Democratic League, whose advanced age, 76, probably explains his low score (92.26%). Lu Yongxiang, on the other hand, President of the Academy of Sciences, recorded a wholly honourable 98.71%. We should note too that the NPC's new number two, Wang Zhaoguo—an associate of Hu Yaobang and then of Zhao Ziyang during the 1980s and later responsible for the CCP United Front Department (relations with non-communists) and for relations with Taiwan—won the almost unanimous support of the deputies (99.18%); but that the choice of the Congress's new Secretary General, Sheng Huaren, former minister of the economy and trade, seems to have been more controversial (95.86%),

probably because it is a key position (see Table 2). Among the eight candidates who failed to win election to the Standing Committee, we should mention Chen Guangyi, former civil aviation chief, Liu Jiyuan, the head of China's Space Society and Ruan Chongwu, former Party secretary in Hainan and once an associate of Hu Yaobang. While the air disasters that occurred in 2002 may explain Chen's defeat, the rejection of the other two men probably has more to do with the deputies' wish to bring into the Standing Committee—a more influential authority that meets every two months—more new blood and in particular the twenty or so “young professional technocrats” whom the Party leadership added to the list of candidates¹⁴.

Table 2: The leadership of the 10th NPC

	For	Against	Abstentions	% for
Wu Bangguo (chairman)	2,918	20	12	98.92
Cheng Siwei*	2,927	11	6	99.42
Ding Shisun*	2,716	141	87	92.26
Gu Xiulian (w)	2,899	24	21	98.47
He Luli (w)*	2,926	11	7	99.39
Ismail Amat (Uighur)	2,937	5	2	99.76
Jiang Zhenghua*	2,937	4	3	99.76
Li Tieying	2,744	132	68	93.21
Lu Yongxiang	2,906	20	18	98.71
Raidi (Tibetan)	2,929	10	5	99.49
Sheng Huaren (secretary general)	2,822	77	45	95.86
Uyungimig (w) (Mongol)	2,925	12	7	99.35
Wang Zhaoguo	2,920	12	12	99.18
Xu Jialu*	2,928	10	6	99.45
Han Qide	2,925	8	11	99.35
Fu Tieshan	2,902	27	15	98.57

incumbent Vice-Chairmen★

NB: The 10th NPC's Standing Committee and Chairmanship were elected on March 15th 2003. The Chairmanship includes the Chairman, 15 Vice-Chairmen and the Secretary General, who now is also Vice-Chairman. The number of ballots was 2,951. The number of valid ballots was 2,950 for the Chairman's election and 2,944 for the Vice-Chairmen's election. Percentages were calculated by the Chinese authorities on the basis of the number of valid ballots.

Source: Wenhuiabao, March 16th 2003, pA1.

The Presidency of the Republic

- 17 But it was the election for President and Vice-President of the People's Republic that provided one of the biggest surprises. In accordance with the state constitution, Jiang had to stand down, having served two terms in office. And following a practice laid down in 1993 by Jiang himself, only the CCP's new Secretary General, Hu, could claim the supreme post¹⁵. The name of the candidate for the vice-presidency, Zeng Qinghong, 63, remained unknown for a long time despite predictions—accurate, as it turned out—made as early as spring 2002 in certain press publications¹⁶. The post of vice-president had been largely honorary before 1998: it was occupied between 1993 and 1998 by the “red capitalist” Rong Yiren. This time, in a show of openness towards society it might have gone once again to a non-communist. Yet, from the outcome of the 16th Party Congress, it seemed clear that, if the CCP adhered to the “institutional tradition” laid down by Hu in 1998, the job must go to the man holding the number five place in the Standing Committee of the Politburo, namely, to Zeng Qinghong. Indeed, at the time that Hu was elected vice-president in 1998, he occupied the same official rank, behind

Jiang, Li Peng, the prime minister Zhu Rongji and the president of the CPPCC, Li Ruihuan. Does that mean that the Vice-President of the republic is henceforward, unfailingly, the presumed successor to the head of state and of the Party? Although one might think that behind this choice might be glimpsed Jiang's secret hope of seeing Zeng one day in the seat of power, the matter is far from decided; and the voting results this March must have troubled old Jiang's dreams just a little, if not dampened Zeng's ardent ambitions.

¹⁸ For while Hu was elected by an overwhelming majority of deputies (two, however, voted for Jiang!), Zeng scored the worst result of any of the CCP leaders publicly elected this year to state posts: nearly four hundred voters withheld their support, which gave him an approval rating of 87.54%! This poor showing is on a par with that of Li Peng in March 1993 when he was re-elected prime minister: 2,537 votes in favour (88.6%), 210 votes against and 120 abstentions. It should be noted also that this percentage is even lower than that obtained by the conservative general, the late Wang Zhen, when he was elected Vice-President of the republic in 1988 (90% in favour)¹⁷. Moreover, a small number of ballots (27) were marked in support for other leaders, among them Li Changchun, the former secretary of Guangdong province (6), Zhu Rongji (3) and Li Ruihuan (1). The announcement of these unusual results was greeted with widespread laughter among the delegates, their hilarity probably not shared by the man elected—and not by Jiang either¹⁸. Indeed, while these percentages may seem high in a democratic context, in the Chinese political system they reflect a genuine revolt, and are perceived in this way both by those elected and by the electors and the general public, although the latter was largely kept in the dark since only Hong Kong and foreign media reported the percentages that we are discussing (see Table 3).

¹⁹ This result has without doubt had some consequences that are not yet fully apparent. For instance, we may wonder if the considerable time that Zeng devotes to questions of foreign policy and security (North Korea, Taiwan) is not indirectly the product of his unpopularity on the domestic stage. Similarly, this unpopularity and the fears aroused by his ambitiousness could explain his long silence during the SARS epidemic, a silence that he broke at the end of April in a statement to the CCP's Central School, of which he is the new Director¹⁹. Be that as it may, despite the constraints of the present political system, the outcome of this election has helped, if not to weaken, then at least to discredit a little further the dominant position of Jiang and his allies and cronies within the country's central authorities.

The Central Military Commission

²⁰ It was hardly likely that the State Central Military Commission (SCMC) would be different from the Party Central Military Commission (PCMC): consequently, dashing the hopes of some observers, the PCMC formed last November was automatically transformed into the SCMC once the deputies had approved Jiang's election as its chairman on March 15th, and the following day, at his instigation, had elected the three vice-chairmen and the four members of this body (see Table 4).

Table 3: State Presidency, Supreme court and Procurate

	For	Against	Abstentions	% for
President & Vice-President of the PRC				
Hu Jintao	2,937	4	3	99.76
Zeng Qinghong	2,578	177	190	87.54
President of the Supreme People's Court				
Xiao Yang	2,799	80	16	95.37
President of the Supreme People's Procuratorate				
Jia Chunwang	2,807	58	73	95.54

NB: The President and Vice-President of the Republic's election took place on March 15th 2003. The Supreme Court President and Procurator General's election took place on March 16th 2003. The number of valid ballots was 2,944 for the State President's election, 2,945 for the State Vice-President's election, 2,895 for the Supreme Court President's election and 2,938 for the Procurator General's election. Percentages were calculated by the Chinese authorities on the basis of the number of valid ballots.

Source: Wenhuibao, March 16th 2003, pA1, and March 17th 2003, pA18.

- 21 As is known, according to the internal document Disidai (The Fourth Generation), Hu ought to have succeeded Jiang at the head of these two commissions in November and March respectively²⁰. As is also known, nothing came of this, either because the author of the document, known under the pseudonym of Zong Hairen, was not informed of the highly sensitive and therefore top secret negotiations surrounding the succession to Jiang, or because Jiang himself later went back on a decision that was still at the draft stage, or again because this option had been proposed by Jiang with the sole purpose of testing out his peers and of estimating the support he would need to keep his position. And it is known, finally, that the plans made in 1998-1999 to set up a National Security Council (NSC) better placed to manage international crises, of which Jiang was to have been chairman, while probably staying on as chairman of the CMC, were provisionally dropped in 2002. They led only—probably after NATO planes had bombed the Chinese embassy in Belgrade in May 1999—to the creation of a CCP leading group for national security (guojia anquan lingdao xiaozu), a flexible and provisional structure aimed mainly at handling international crises and at co-ordinating decision-making in the diplomatic, military and energy fields. Headed by Jiang, this leading group then brought together, according to some sources, several high-ranking civilian leaders, among them Zhu Rongji, Hu Jintao, Wei Jianxing, the head of the Party's disciplinary apparatus, Qian Qichen, then vice-premier in charge of foreign affairs, Zeng Qinghong (Secretary General) and Liu Huaqiu, director of the government's Foreign Affairs Bureau²¹. The difficulties encountered in defining the relative mandates of the NSC and the CMC, Jiang's persistent refusal to hand over the presidency of the CMC to Hu, the problem of introducing a fundamental reform of decision-making authorities in matters of external security at such a politically delicate time: these difficulties combined to torpedo the whole project—at least for the present. At all events, in the course of summer 2002, Jiang forced the Party leadership to keep him on as chairman of the CMC. Then, a fortnight before the Party Congress, against all expectations, he forced his main detractor within the leadership, Li Ruihuan (chairman of the CPPCC and number four in the regime) to retire aged 68. Li, as we have seen, was to have succeeded Li Peng as chairman of the NPC. With this stroke, Jiang removed the last (modest) obstacle to his renewal as head of the CMC.

- 22 Some Army delegates to the NPC declared that, on the eve of the Party Congress, Jiang proposed to the military chiefs—and probably to the CMC—that he would stand down. The chiefs are said to have refused on the grounds of his “good understanding of military and international affairs”. This information, not very believable, was released to the public in an attempt to justify Jiang’s poor election results (see Table and below). These deputies’ comments served above all to strengthen the notion that, as regards the CMC leadership, the legitimacy of the military hierarchy had been more important than that of the civilian representatives of the Party²². And one can easily see with hindsight that all this apparent uncertainty over Jiang’s departure from the CMC was no more than tactical posturing. Indeed, other and better sources support the hypothesis that Jiang fully intended to stay on. They say on the contrary that, towards the end of the 16th Congress, on November 13th, Jiang asked General Zhang Wannian, outgoing vice-chairman of the CMC, to submit to the Standing Committee of the Congress Presidium meeting in Zhongnanhai a motion proposing to extend his term as chairman of the CMC. This motion had already been signed by a score of leaders, all from the military. Zhang particularly asked Hu to give his opinion after several members of the former leadership, such as Li Lanqing, and retired servicemen such as General Liu Huaqing, had approved the proposal: with his back to the wall, Hu could only follow suit. The Standing Committee of the Congress Presidium, being mostly made up of Jiang’s associates, was obviously bound to back the decision, despite the opposition of several leaders in retirement, or close to it, who were also members (including Li Ruihuan, Wei Jianxing and Wan Li)²³. Yet, the initiative—deliberately kept secret from all outside the narrow circle of those in power and probably disclosed only to the Politburo—caught many delegates at the 16th Congress off their guard; and they resented it; if they had been consulted—which they were not—perhaps the support for keeping Jiang in his post would not have been so decisive²⁴.

Table 4: State Central Military Commission

		For	Against	Abstentions	% for
Chairman	Jiang Zemin	2,726	98	122	92.53
Vice-Chairmen (3)	Hu Jintao	2,928	1	8	99.69
	Guo Boxiong	2,904	14	19	98.88
	Cao Gangchuan	2,717	9	11	99.31
Members (4)	Xu Caihou	2,918	12	7	99.35
	Liang Guanglie	2,926	6	5	99.62
	Liao Xilong	2,923	6	8	99.52
	Li Jinai	2,925	6	6	99.59

NB: The SCMC Chairman's election took place on March 16th 2003. The SCMP Vice-Chairmen'and member's election took place on March 16th 2003. The number of valid ballots was 2,946 for the Chairman's election and 2,937 for the Vice-Chairmen'and member's election. Percentages were calculated by the Chinese authorities on the basis of the number of valid ballots.

Source: Wenhuiabao, March 16th 2003, pA1, and March 17th 2003, pA18.

- 23 The results of the election of the SCMC are in some way the proof of this, after the event. Although the two congresses are distinct, they are largely interconnected: indeed, the delegates to the Party Congress and to the National People's Congress are often the same national and local leaders—it would be helpful to know precisely the ratio, but one may estimate it at two to one.

- 24 It so happened that, of the 2,946 deputies present for the vote, more than 200 refused to support Jiang's election (92.53% voted yes). What is more, 36 deputies asked for Hu to take over, while two others wrote Zhu Rongji's name on their ballot papers²⁵. The following day, by contrast, Hu was re-elected as vice-chairman of the SCMC with an overwhelming majority of the votes cast (99.69%). The other members of the SCMC, all from the military, encountered no real opposition. The few "no" votes and additional abstentions were directed against sitting generals (and the oldest of them) and are not really significant.
- 25 Can this vote speed up Jiang's departure from the Commission? Probably not. Only the true intentions of the man concerned, and his capacity to continue imposing them on the rest of the Party's new leadership—he has at least five allies (out of nine members) in the Politburo's new Standing Committee—could shorten a term that is fixed in principle at five years (2003-2008). Between 1989 and 1999, Jiang was the only civilian to sit on the CMC. Since then, his successor has been at his side. This arrangement may be seen as transitory²⁶. But one is also entitled to think that it will serve as a precedent for another succession model, whereby Hu would become, at the moment accepted by Jiang and the majority of the leadership, chairman of the CMC and Zeng, the Vice-President of the republic, would succeed him as first vice-chairman of the Commission²⁷. . .
- 26 In other words, the field is still open.
The Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate
- 27 The Supreme Court and the Supreme Procuratorate are formally required to report on their work to the NPC; and, as usual, they have been subjected to sharp criticism, not only by what one might call the "pro-security" group in the Congress but also by a large number of delegates concerned about the powerlessness and malfunctioning of these two institutions, the second in particular²⁸.
- 28 As regards the election of their head, the situation in the Court looked different from that in the Procuratorate. Xiao Yang, president of the Supreme Court since 1998, was asking for his term to be extended for a further period of five years. By contrast, Han Zhubin, the incompetent General Procurator—before 1998 he was Railways Minister—was retiring after a single term, handing over to Jia Chunwang, the former Minister of State Security (1993-1998) and Public Security (1998-2002).
- 29 Xiao Yang, Minister of Justice before 1998 and a good lawyer, was re-elected with, broadly speaking, an honourable score (95.37%) considering the vigorous criticisms levelled at the poor functioning of the courts²⁹. As for Jia (95.54%), he was the target of an opposition vote—admittedly a less angry opposition than his predecessor had faced (a 65% "yes" vote in 1998) but still a significant one within the Chinese context, based probably on his background as former boss of the secret services and then of the police and on the active role he had played in repressing Falungong: these were qualifications that had prepared him more for repression than for defending the rights of those faced with prosecution.
The State Council
- 30 The re-election of the leaders of the central government was much less controversial. As he had agreed to do in 1998, Zhu Rongji (74 years old), the Premier, was retiring after a single term in office (according to the Constitution, he could, like his predecessor, Li Peng, have claimed a second term). Zhu's chosen successor, Wen Jiabao,

is not among Jiang's associates. Having, until the Tiananmen massacre, worked closely with Zhao Ziyang in the Party's Central Secretariat, Wen survived the political buffeting following that crisis, more because of his low factional colouration than because of the self-criticism he agreed to undertake or the low profile that he kept for several years³⁰. He was promoted to vice-premier in 1998 by Zhu, who had previously entrusted him with agricultural affairs; then, from 2000 onwards, Zhu preferred him as his successor over two of Jiang's favourites: Wu Bangguo, treacherously sacrificed by Zhu who gave him the "mission impossible" of reforming the state enterprises, and Li Changchun, criticised over his management of Guangdong. Wen is a consensus man with a calm and controlled voice, preferring to appear close to the people, particularly those left behind by growth; he is strengthened by his experience of China's poor regions, particularly Gansu; and he is well-liked beyond official circles. But it is significant that he is popular too within these circles! And the vote he won at the NPC, at the time of his election as head of government on March 16th, tends to demonstrate this: in fact, he registered an even higher level of support than had his predecessor (99.35% as against 98%), whose trenchant and sometimes authoritarian character later attracted much ill-feeling.

Table 5: The State Council

		For	Against	Abstentions	% for
Premier	Wen Jiabao	2,905	3	16	99.35
Vice-Premiers (4)	Huang Ju	2,893	161	81	91.75
	Wu Yi (w)	2,901	18	16	98.84
	Zeng Peiyuan	2,861	53	21	97.48
	Hui Liangyu	2,861	41	33	97.48
State councilors (5)	Zhou Yongkang	2,876	39	20	97.99
	Cao Gangchuan	2,908	14	13	99.08
	Tang Jiaxuan	2,815	77	43	95.91
	Hua Jianmin	2,759	104	72	94.00
	Chen Zhili (w)	2,577	240	118	87.80
Secretary General (held concurrently)	Hua Jianmin	2,793	83	59	95.16
Minister of Foreign Affairs	Li Zhaoxing	2,897	21	17	98.71
Minister of National Defense (held concurrently)	Cao Gangchuan	2,909	15	11	99.11
Minister in charge of the State Development and Reform Commission**	Ma Kai	2,884	34	17	98.26
Minister of Education	Zhou Ji	2,860	43	32	97.44
Minister of Science and Technology	Xu Guanghua*	2,897	20	18	98.71
Minister in charge of the Commission of Science Technology and Industry for National Defense	Zhang Yunchuan	2,920	10	5	99.49
Minister in charge of the State Ethnic Affairs Com.	Li Dezhui*	2,928	7	0	99.76
Minister of Public Security (held concurrently)	Zhou Yongkang*	2,872	47	16	97.85
Minister of State Security	Xu Yongxue*	2,902	21	12	98.88
Minister of Supervision	Li Zhilun	2,918	10	7	99.42
Minister of Civil Affairs	Li Xueju	2,916	12	7	99.35
Minister of Justice	Zhang Fusen*	2,909	19	7	99.11
Minister of Finance	Jin Rongjing	2,854	62	19	97.24
Minister of Personnel	Zhang Baolin	2,912	16	7	99.22
Minister of Labour and Social Security	Zheng Silin	2,894	27	14	98.60
Minister of Land and Natural Resources	Tian Fengshan*	2,897	26	12	98.71
Minister of Construction	Wang Guangtao*	2,922	8	5	99.56
Minister of Railways	Liu Zhijun	2,903	21	11	98.91
Minister of Communications	Zhang Chunxian*	2,912	18	5	99.22
Minister of Information Industry and the Telecom Industry	Wang Xudong	2,846	61	28	96.97
Minister of Water Resources	Wang Shucheng*	2,921	10	4	99.52
Minister of Agriculture	Du Qinglin*	2,904	20	11	98.94
Minister of Commerce**	Lu Fuguan	2,906	19	10	99.01
Minister of Culture	Sun Xiaohong*	2,882	36	17	98.19
Minister of Health	Zhang Wenkang* (1)	2,822	85	28	96.15
Minister in charge of the State Commission for Population and Family Planning**	Zhang Weiqing*	2,922	11	2	99.56
Governor of the People's Bank of China	Zhou Xiaochuan (2)	2,722	164	49	92.75
Auditor-General of the National Audit Office	Li Jinhua*	2,904	20	11	98.94

Incumbent minister. All other officials were promoted in March 2003 ★

New or restructures commission or ministry ★★

Zhang was dismissed on April 20th 2003 and was replaced by Vice-Premier Wu Yi.

(2) Zhou Xiaochuan was appointed in December 2002.

NB: The Premier's election took place on March 16th 2003. The number of valid ballots was 2,925. The other members of the State Council were elected on March 17th 2003. The number valid ballots was 2,935. Percentages were calculated by the Chinese authorities on the basis of the number of valid ballots.

Sources: Wenhuibao, March 17th 2003, p.A18; Mingbao 18th 2003, p.A22.

Table 6: The leadership of the CPPCC

	For	Against	Abstentions	% of for
Jia Qinglin (Chairman)	1,990	79	76	92.77
Vice-Chairmen (24) :				
Abulahat Abdurixit (Uighur)	2,142	1	2	99.86
Ba Jin	1,936	122	87	90.26
Bai Lichen*	2,133	10	2	99.44
Chen Kuiyuan	2,096	40	9	97.72
Ding Guangxun*	2,138	6	1	99.67
Hao Jianxiu (w)	2,106	28	11	98.18
Henry Fok Ying-tung (Huo Yingdong)*	2,135	7	3	99.53
Huang Mengfu	2,136	5	4	99.58
Li Guixian*	2,049	53	43	95.52
Li Meng	2,121	19	5	98.88
Li Zhaozhao (Zhuang)	2,126	14	5	99.11
Liao Hui	2,115	22	8	98.60
Liu Yandong (w)	2,108	21	16	98.28
Luo Haocai*	2,141	4	0	99.81
Ma Man-Kei (Ma Wanqi)*	2,133	4	8	99.44
Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme* (Tibetan)	2,110	22	13	98.37
Pagbalha Geleg Namgyai (Tibetan)	2,133	7	5	99.44
Wang Xuan	2,130	9	6	99.30
Wang Zhongyu	2,115	23	7	98.60
Xu Kuangdi	2,123	9	13	98.97
Zhang Huaixi	2,120	15	20	98.83
Zhang Kehui*	2,138	6	1	99.67
Zhang Siqing*	2,122	15	8	98.93
Zhou Tienong*	2,132	6	7	99.39
Secretary general:				
Zheng Wantong*	2,142	8	1	99.86

.Incumbent members of the CPPCC leadership ★

NB: The CPPCC Chairmanship's election took place on March 13th 2003. 2,152 delegates took part in it. The number of valid ballots was 2,145. Percentages were calculated by the Chinese authorities on the basis of the number of valid ballots. In March 2003, the number of Vice-Chairmen was cut from 31 to 24; 13 of them are non-CCP figures (against 16 in 1998) and 11 are CCP members (against 15 in 1998).

Sources: Mingbao, March 14th 2003, p.A19; Wenhuibao, March 11th 2003, p.A4.

- 31 The next day, the elections were held for the other seats on the State Council (SC): the four vice-premiers, the five State Councillors including the Secretary General (these nine leaders, together with the Premier, making up the Executive Committee of the SC), as well as the 28 commission chairmen and ministers of a new central government that is slightly reduced in size (one commission fewer). Here again, while most of the new cabinet members were elected without any hitches, there were still a few surprises left for us (see Table 5). Having had his fingers burned by his own and Zeng's poor results, Jiang is said to have asked Wu Bangguo to mobilise the delegates, who—as we have seen—mostly belong to the Party and are subject to its voting discipline³¹. Or so we might have thought. Once again, those leaders most clearly associated with Jiang were openly challenged. Thus it was with Huang Ju (97.75%), the former boss of Shanghai (1994-2002) and the conqueror in spring 2002 of the popular (at least among foreign businessmen) Xu Kuangdi; Huang replaced Li Lanqing as first vice-premier, his post being “formal”, that is to say, without specific duties beyond monitoring Wen on Jiang's behalf³². This was also the treatment handed out by deputies to Chen Zhili (87.80%), another member of the “Shanghai gang”—she had directed the Party's Propaganda Bureau there during the 1990s; Chen was promoted in 1998, despite her lack of competence, to the post of education minister and then state councillor responsible for education and culture. The new and powerful Secretary General of the State Council, Hua Jianmin, who they say is Jiang's watcher there, also won a lower than average vote

(94%): having been in charge of economic planning in Shanghai at the start of the 1990s, Hua was called to Peking by Jiang, who had him named as deputy Secretary General of the Party's powerful leading group in charge of finance and the economy³³. Tang Jiaxuan, who succeeded Qian Qichen as state councillor responsible for foreign policy, may also be included in this category.

- 32 Among the ministers, the election of two men close to Jiang and Zeng Qinghong—Zhang Wenkang and Wang Xudong—was disputed to some extent. Zhang, formerly Jiang's personal (military) doctor and minister of health since 1998, scored among the worst results of any of the 28 ministers (96.15% and in 27th position). Despite the active and positive role that he played in lifting the veil of secrecy and ignorance surrounding the Aids epidemic in Henan arising from blood transfusions, Zhang was probably here paying the price for his privileged relationship with the former secretary general. He was to pay an even heavier price on April 20th when he was dismissed from his post following the spread of the SARS epidemic in Peking, for having too long faithfully pursued a mendacious and even criminal policy dictated by the highest bodies in the Party, a policy that only the pressure from the World Health Organisation and the constraints of globalisation were eventually able to challenge.
- 33 As for Wang Xudong (96.97% "yes" vote, in 26th position), his relatively weak result is probably due as much to his poor knowledge of the important and sensitive sector—the information industry—that he is now responsible for as to his close connections with Zeng Qinghong³⁴.
- 34 On the other hand, those close to Zhu Rongji, such as Wu Yi, who became after April 20th the super co-ordinator of the struggle against this same SARS epidemic and (provisional) minister of health, or Ma Kai, the chairman of the big new State Development and Reform Commission, were not subjected to any noticeable opposition. The only Zhu supporter to have been somewhat challenged was Zhou Xiaochuan, the new governor of the People's Bank of China, who scored the second worst result after Huang Ju. For this, two explanations may be offered. On the one hand, it is possible that a certain number of deputies bore a grudge against Zhou for his management—unprofitable for the shareholders—of the Securities Regulatory Commission which he directed from 2000 to 2002. On the other hand, despite his good relations with Zhu, Zhou is also close to Jiang: his father, Zhou Jiannan, was in fact the direct superior of the future Chinese number one, when Jiang was working in the Ministry of Mechanical Industry . . .
- 35 That said, while the State Council includes only about one-third of ministers close to Jiang, its Standing Committee, that is to say, its leading body, is still dominated by Jiang supporters. Wen has only Wu Yi for an ally there. Apart from Huang Ju, Hua Jianmin and Chen Zhili, Jiang can also count on Zeng Peiyan, Hui Liangyu, Zhou Yongkang, General Cao Gangchuan, the new defence minister, and Tang Jiaxuan to bend this body's decision-making—mainly in the social and economic area—in his preferred direction. Indeed, Zeng Peiyan—who is a former president of the State Commission on Development and the Plan (1998-2003) and now the State Council's overall co-ordinator of financial and economic affairs—worked closely with Jiang in the electronics industry. Hui was Party secretary in Jiangsu up until December 2002 and is now in charge of agricultural questions in the SC; his abilities are recognised and his fruitful collaboration with Zhu and Wen is confirmed. Nevertheless, Hui is also increasingly perceived as belonging to the Zeng Qinghong faction, which is said to have advanced

his career, as is the case with a good third of the new Politburo members: Liu Yushan (Propaganda), He Guoqiang (Organisation), Wang Gang (General Affairs), Zhang Deqiang (Guangdong), Chen Liangyu (Shanghai) and Zhou Yongkang (Public Security)³⁵. Admittedly, the new minister of public security and ex-boss of Sichuan, Zhou Yongkang, must also have given some assurances to the Li Peng faction to attain that post and above all, in December 2002, the position of secretary (head) of the Party's powerful Political and Legal Commission, formerly occupied by Luo Gan, a supporter of Li³⁶. But this promotion would not have been possible without the approval of Jiang, who appreciated his efficient crackdown on Falungong in Sichuan, and without the active support of Zeng Qinghong, whose relationship with Zhou dates from their time together in the oil industry, then controlled by Yu Qiuli. Moreover, according to some sources, Zhou is brother-in-law to Zeng, whose younger sister he married in 1981³⁷.

- 36 Lastly, Wu Yi and another third of the new ministers are closer to Zhu Rongji than to Wen or even to Hu Jintao. In a politico-institutional context such as this, Wen had scarcely any choice but to rely on Wu Yi to direct the battle against SARS. And, more generally, he will have to strengthen his alliance with those ministers still loyal to Zhu if he wishes the State Council to back the reforms that he, in collaboration with Hu, will be formulating³⁸. The election results of March 16th and 17th will probably encourage Wen to consolidate the partnership he has formed with the new Secretary General-President. They will also have warned him against possible counter-attacks by Jiang and his supporters³⁹.

Annex 1: The leadership of the CCP after the 16th Congress (November 2002)

General Secretary of the Central Committee		
Hu Jintao		
Members of the Politburo Standing Committee (9)		
Hu Jintao	Wu Bangguo	Wen Jiabao
Jia Qinglin	Zeng Qinghong	Huang Ju
Wu Guanzheng	Li Changchun	Luo Gan
Members of the Politburo (24 + 1)		
Cao Gangchuan	Chen Liangyu	Guo Boxiong
He Guoqiang	Hu Jintao	Huang Ju
Hui Liangyu	Jia Qinglin	Li Changchun
Liu Qi	Liu Yunshang	Luo Gan
Wang Lequan	Wang Zhaoguo	Wen Jiabao
Wu Bangguo	Wu Guanzheng	Wu Yi
Yu Zhengsheng	Zeng Peiyan	Zeng Qinghong
Zhang Dejiang	Zhang Lichang	Zhou Yongkang
Alternate member of the Politburo		
Wang Gang		
Members of the Central Committee Secretariat		
He Guoqiang	He Yong	Liu Yunshan
Wang Gang	Xu Caihou	Zeng Qinghong
Zhou Yongkang		
Central Military Commission of the Central Committee		
Chairman		
Jiang Zemin		
Vice-Chairmen		
Cao Gangchuan	Hu Jintao	Guo Boxiong
Members		
Li Jinai	Liang Guanglie	Liao Xilong
Xu Caihou		

Annex 2: The central leadership of the CCP and the functions of its members

The Politburo Standing Committee (9)	Other Members of the Politburo (16)
Hu Jintao (1942) General Secretary of the Party, Vice-Chairman of the CCP Central Military Commission and President of the PRC.	Provincial chiefs (6)
Wu Bangguo (1941) Chairman of the National People's Congress.	Chen Liangyu (1946) Party secretary of Shanghai.
Wen Jiabao (1942) Premier.	Liu Qi (1942) Party secretary of Peking.
Jia Qinglin (1940) Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.	Wang Lequan (1944) Party secretary of Xinjiang.
Zeng Qinghong (1939) Member of CCP Secretariat (No. 2), and Vice-President of the PRC.	Yu Zhengsheng (1945) Party secretary of Hubei.
Huang Ju (1938) Executive Vice-Premier.	Zhang Dejiang (1946) Party secretary of Guangdong.
Wu Guanzhong (1938) Secretary of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection.	Zhang Lichang (1939) Party secretary of Tianjin.
Li Changchun (1944) In charge of propaganda and cultural affairs.	Central Committee organs (3)
Luo Gan (1937) In charge of security and justice affairs.	He Guojiang (1943) Director of the Organisation Department of the Central Committee.
Central Military Commission of Party (8)	Liu Yunshan (1947) Director of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee.
Chairman	Wang Gang (1942) Director of the General Office of the Central Committee.
Jiang Zemin	State councillors (4)
Vice-Chairmen (3)	Hui Liangyu (1944) Vice-Premier in charge of agriculture affairs; former Party secretary of Jiangsu.
Hu Jintao	Wu Yi (1938) Vice-Premier in charge of foreign trade affairs and more recently of public health related affairs.
Guo Boxiong (Executive Vice-Chairman)	Zeng Peiyan (1938) Vice-Premier in charge of finance and industry affairs; former Minister in charge of the State Development Planning Commission.
Cao Gangchuan Minister of Defence.	Zhou Yongkang (1942) Secretary of the CCP Political and Legal Commission; State councillor; Minister of Public Security; former Party secretary of Sichuan.
Members (4)	People's Liberation Army (2)
Xu Caihou Director of General Political Department of the PLA.	Cao Gangchuan (1935) Vice-Chairman of the Central Military Commission, and Minister of Defence.
Liang Guanglie Chief of General Staff of the PLA.	Guo Boxiong (1942) Executive Vice-Chairman of the Central Military Commission.
Liao Xilong Director of the General Logistics Department of the PLA.	National People's Congress (1)
Li Jinai Director of the General Armament Department of the PLA.	Wang Zhaoguo (1941) Vice President of the NPC; former director of the United Front Work Department of the Central Committee.

The CPPCC

- 37 Two-thirds of the CPPCC is made up of non-communists and individuals from what one could call “official civil society”: it is a sort of Chinese upper house whose consultative role is particularly limited; it symbolises the united front between the CCP and the eight “democratic parties” which are strongly represented on it; and it also acts once a year as a loudspeaker for the country’s problems. The CPPCC’s members are chosen by the Party’s United Front Department, whose director is always vice-chairman of this body (today Liu Yandong) and its real number two. The membership brings together personalities as diverse as the writer Ba Jin, the pro-communist Hong Kong millionaire Henry Fok and the actress Gong Li, who is much photographed at every annual meeting of this conference.
- 38 As demanded by the protocol of the Party-state, the number four of the Standing Committee of the Politburo and of the regime, Jia Qinglin, was therefore appointed as chairman, in succession to the unfortunate Li Ruihuan. Li, unlike other outgoing members of the Chinese leadership, was not authorised to propose his own successor⁴⁰. Jia’s promotion to the Party’s supreme leadership and his nomination as head of the 10th CPPCC (2,238 members) did not pass without attracting considerable criticism both in China and abroad: indeed, considering that the CPPCC is China’s most open institution to the world beyond the Party and the country’s elites, what message did Jiang Zemin intend to convey by promoting as its chairman an ally who is among those most strongly suspected of corruption? Jia was CCP secretary in Fujian (1996-2000) where, moreover, his wife, Lin Youfang, was in charge of the province’s external trade, at the time of the great Yuanhua smuggling scandal—which cost the state six billion US dollars. Jiang promoted him to number one in Peking, wanting to build up his own support in the capital. Though he protected Jia when those responsible for the illegal

trade were incriminated (among them Li Jizhou, the former deputy minister of public security, and Lai Changxin, the crooked businessman who fled to Canada), Jia's reputation in China is nevertheless bad. For this reason, his election as president of the CPPCC, on March 13th, was awaited with some impatience.

39 The outcome of that election was not as negative as some had hoped and others feared. It is true that, with 92.77% of the votes cast (1,990 out of 2,152), Jia was the worst elected of all this body's leaders—with the exception of Ba Jin whose great age (he is 98) and infirmity probably explains his poor showing (90.26%, see Table 6). But Jia was in the end better elected than Zeng and practically as well as Jiang. Being composed of more non-communists, was the CPPCC more indulgent towards Jia than the NPC would have been? It is difficult to say⁴¹. One is inclined to think that much less was at stake than in Zeng's election. Jia, who is 62, is still a protégé of Jiang, but his transfer to the CPPCC is seen more as an honourable retirement accorded to a loyal follower than as a springboard to greater responsibilities.

40 Some members of the CPPCC leadership were, on the other hand, better elected: the unfortunate ex-Mayor of Shanghai, Xu Kuangdi, the former secretary general of Zhu Rongji's government, Wang Zongyu, the new president of the Academy of Social Sciences, Chen Kuiyuan, and even Liu Yandong, the Party's watchdog in the CPPCC.

So what?

41 They say that these results threw Jiang into a fit of anger that lasted for three days. Despite the narrow margin between the voting results for his supporters, on the one hand, and for his detractors, on the other, the message appeared particularly clear. Jiang blamed "outside interference", and the pernicious spreading of the idea of the "Shanghai gang": he considered this untrue, despite the obvious favouritism that benefited those leaders who had worked with him in that city⁴². Next, he is said to have asked the Central Secretariat of the Party—in particular Liu Yunshang, He Guoqiang and Wang Gang, three of Zeng Qinghong's people, to build up favourable publicity about the badly elected leaders, especially about Zeng Qinghong, Jia Qinglin, Huang Ju and Chen Zhili⁴³. For what it is worth, this instruction has helped to widen the fault lines that these elections allowed to appear. It does not augur well for the Party's capacity to remain united until the next NPC in 2008; and, in the long run, it might alter the new distribution of responsibilities that was proposed during the 16th Party Congress and then confirmed at the meetings of the NPC and the CPPCC. Yet, at the same time, these elections reflect some degree of institutionalisation in the present political system.

A new distribution of responsibilities

42 The most important implication to be drawn from these meetings is that Jiang Zemin is still the Chinese number one and that his supporters dominate the main centres of power in the Party and the state. However, this obvious truth must immediately be qualified, not only because of the complaints and objections among the deputies but also, and most particularly, in light of the distribution of tasks among the country's top leaders.

43 While Jiang's prerogatives in the strategic and foreign policy fields remain significant, in domestic affairs it is the duo of Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao that is in the ascendancy. Of this the handling of the SARS epidemic is, as we shall see, a clear illustration.

44 Officially, it is Hu, in his capacity as President of the republic and above all as Secretary General of the CCP, who directs the formation and implementation of China's foreign

policy. In fact, since March 16th, it is he that picks up the phone when a foreign head of government seeks to communicate quickly and at the highest level with the Chinese leadership⁴⁴. And it is recognised that Hu has also gradually won the chairmanship of the Party's major leading groups dealing with foreign affairs, including the one on national security, the one on Taiwan and the one on foreign policy.

- 45 Be that as it may, the make-up of these leading groups betrays the strong presence, even the domination, of Jiang's associates. Thus it is with the leading group national security. After the NPC, Zeng Qinhong was promoted to be vice-chairman of the leading group on national security, of which he had before been Secretary General. In the absence of the National Security Council (see above), this leading group is a body for debating and decision-making whose role deserves close attention⁴⁵. This structure could enable Hu to establish more quickly and firmly his role in the field of external security. In the longer term, it might be transformed into a new National Security Council and supplant the Central Military Commission, especially when it comes to managing international crises—obviously after Jiang has agreed to retire, perhaps half way between the 16th and 17th Party Congresses. But Hu would have at the same time to keep in check Zeng's influence in the foreign and security policy realm.
- 46 As for Zeng, with Jiang behind him and wielding his constitutional prerogatives as vice-president—assisting the President in his work (article 82)—he has globally tried to keep his powers in the fields of foreign affairs and security, in particular on Asian questions, such as the dispute between North Korea and the US⁴⁶. Nevertheless, since late May 2003, Zeng's influence in this area has decreased. For instance, since then, he does not belong any more to the leading group on Taiwan of which he was reported of being vice-chairman after the NPC meeting: now chaired by Hu and not by Jiang any more, this group's vice-chairman is Jia Qinglin, the CPPCC chairman, a probably less competing deputy, while as before two military men sit in it, Guo Boxiong and deputy chief of staff Xiong Guangkai⁴⁷. More importantly, since early June, it has been confirmed that Hu had succeeded Jiang as head of the CCP leading group on foreign affairs; and while Premier Wen Jiabao is now vice-head, and members include Vice-Premier Wu Yi, State Councillor Tang Jiaxuan and Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing, Zeng does not sit any more in it⁴⁸.
- 47 Now that Jiang Zemin has left most of these leading groups (except perhaps the one on the policy towards the US), he will still be able to exert his leadership, in two ways. On the one hand, his position as president of the CMC enables him to maintain a direct hold over the Army and to “listen to the politics behind the guns” (*chuiqiang tingzheng*) to borrow the phrase used in a Xinhua article⁴⁹. And, since the 16th Party Congress, he is officially kept informed of all the debates within the Politburo (and its Standing Committee) and is still consulted on important decisions—and we can imagine that they are not taken without his approval⁵⁰. On the other hand, Jiang relies on a number of trusted leaders to exert his control over the new duo in power. Zeng is the most important of these in the field of international policy but Jia Qinglin is another one to watch.
- 48 For instance, it is worth indicating that Zeng has some contacts in the PLA that might help him to increase his influence in strategic and military affairs. Zeng is the son of Zeng Shan (1899-1972), a former official of the Jiangxi Soviet who became minister of transport during the 1960s, and of Deng Liujin (born in 1911), one of the few women to have taken part in the Long March: Zeng was born to power. He was educated at the

Peking Institute of Technology, began his career in the weapons industry, then moved up under the protection of Yu Qiuli, who headed the Political Department of the PLA during the 1980s. They say it was Zeng who, during the 1990s, helped Jiang to establish good relations with top military leaders and to persuade Deng Xiaoping to get rid of the Yang brothers (Yang Shangkun et Yang Baibing). Moreover, Zeng's family is still doing well in the Army: his sister, Major General Zeng Haisheng, and his two younger brothers are all career officers. Zeng arranged for his sister to be elected to the NPC; and today she is director of the department of general affairs of the general staff, a key post that Zeng himself may find useful in the future⁵¹.

- 49 Consequently, for the foreseeable future, Hu Jintao and his allies will find the assertion of their power in foreign and military affairs somewhat impeded in spite of the stronger profile Hu has developed after his trip to Russia and his participation in the G8 summit in Evian (France) in June 2003 and its gradual control of the CCP leading groups dealing with foreign and security questions. That does not mean, if Hu's hands were freer in these areas, that he would introduce important changes. One may think that, on the main subjects—relations with the United States, Japan, Taiwan, North Korea, Iraq, G8—a wide convergence of views continues to exist, and results in a foreign policy that is ironically more accommodating towards Washington than France's or Germany's. And this consensus helps to lessen the power struggle that has become visible in this field. Yet, the struggle really does exist and in the long run may lead to open conflict.
- 50 In domestic affairs, the situation seems more clearly propitious for the Hu-Wen team; and it will probably be on this ground that the latter will try to strengthen its influence, as was shown by the way the SARS epidemic was handled.
- 51 Admittedly, as we have seen, Jiang's supporters dominate the highest authorities and Zeng's role is equally important there. Thus, most Politburo members (about 17 out of 25), and most members of its Standing Committee (at least five—Wu Bangguo, Jia Qinglin, Zeng Qinghong, Huang Ju and Li Changchun—out of nine), are close to Jiang. These leaders often also have direct links with Zeng. And these are the bodies that make the most important decisions. While their meetings are not always publicly announced, partially re-establishing a policy adopted in 1987 by Zhao Ziyang and abandoned after Tiananmen, they have been so more often since the 16th Party Congress, which tends to suggest a greater frequency. Since Hu and Wen do not seek to cut themselves off from the rest of Chinese leaders, their interest lies in getting these bodies to take on as many decisions as possible, in particular by systematising their voting procedures. But Jiang's continuing influence helps to limit their margin for manoeuvre.
- 52 Yet, apart from Zeng and, to a lesser extent, Li Changchun, the new propaganda chief, Jiang's other allies in the Standing Committee do not hold "strategic" responsibilities. And Zeng's powers are concentrated inside the apparatus of the Party, which in China is not responsible for economic or social affairs. Unlike other Party-states of the Soviet type, the Central Committee of the CCP has no departments in these sectors and the CCP economic leading groups are dominated by government leaders (communists, of course). As number two on the Central Secretariat, Zeng dominates it by his activism and by the number of his allies. On the one hand, he directly supervises the organisation sector, that is to say, the promotion and training of senior cadres. In this capacity, as we have seen, he has been since 2002 the director of the Party's Central School. On the other hand, among the Central Committee's six other secretaries, he has

at least four allies: He Guoqiang, in charge of organisation, Liu Yunshan, of propaganda, Zhou Yongkang, of the police and justice, and Wang Gang of co-ordination. In other words, Zeng's domain recalls that of Qiao Shi, a powerful CCP leader forced by Jiang to retire in 1997. Does that mean he is doomed to fail?

- 53 In the field of economic and social policy, the influence of Jiang, Zeng and their supporters is more limited; rather, it is counterbalanced by the promotion of numerous collaborators of Zhu Rongji, Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao, mainly within the State Council. These are the fields where problems are the most urgent, where popular expectations are the greatest and where relations between the leadership and society need to be most delicately handled. One might extend this conclusion to the governing teams in the provinces. Last winter, during the great government reshuffle, no fewer than 13 secretaries of provinces (or big cities) and 19 governors (or mayors) were promoted. And most of these are associates of Hu and, to a lesser extent, of Wen⁵². Among them was Meng Xuenong, Peking's brand new mayor—appointed last December—who was sacrificed, on April 20th, by a leadership anxious to rebuild some confidence among people hard hit by SARS and eager—above all—to convince Jiang Zemin into sacking the health minister.
- 54 This price was relatively worth paying, in that the spread of SARS in northern China has given Hu and Wen the chance to strengthen their hold over the Party and the state. In the front line against the epidemic, Hu, Wen and Wu Yi were able on April 17th to impose a change of policy on the Politburo, persuading it to stop falsifying data and deliberately misinforming the public and instead to adopt a more transparent attitude and to mobilise all available medical resources, whether civilian or military. When the Standing Committee of the Politburo voted on April 18th, only Zeng Qinghong, Huang Ju and Jia Qinglin (the worst elected candidates at the NPC and the CPPCC!) abstained, seeing that these decisions gave the advantage to Hu and Wen. The six other members approved Hu's proposals: they included Wu Bangguo, Li Changchun, Luo Gan and Wu Guangzheng. And at the subsequent emergency meeting of the Politburo, 18 out of 24 members voted "yes", while four abstained and only two voted against: Liu Qi, the Peking secretary, who would have had to bear the responsibility on Meng Xuenong's behalf and had just had to make a public self-criticism, and Zeng Peiyan, another of Jiang's supporters⁵³.
- 55 It is probable that the pressure from the World Health Organisation, from foreign businessmen settled in China and from the international community would in any case have overcome the old, Soviet-style bureaucratic reflexes of the Party apparatus. However, the popularity that Hu and Wen had demonstrated during the NPC meeting was—at least provisionally—swelled by the extra legitimacy conferred by this sudden change of course. By contrast, the prolonged silence of Jiang and his supporters helped to deepen the mistrust with which they were viewed within Chinese society. This is why, shortly after April 17th, one after another—Jiang, Zeng, Huang Ju, Jia Qinglin—they spoke out, not so much to support the mobilisation against SARS but to remind the front line leaders of their presence and their powers.
- 56 In the end, the success of the authorities in this battle will not only be based on the degree of transparency or compassion that they have showed: it will largely arise from the state's capacity to improve its governance and to co-ordinate action by its administrative systems, which too often, in the field of health as in others, resemble a set of ineradicable and fundamentally selfish feudal bureaucracies.

Towards an uneasy cohabitation?

- 57 The distribution of tasks, referred to above, cannot mask the growing rivalries within the “fourth generation” of the Chinese communists. For the time being, these rivalries have less to do with the choice of policies or of which reforms to pursue than with seizing control of the main levers of power.
- 58 The way in which the battle against SARS was fought might give grounds for believing that the regime is changing, that it is using this mobilisation to accelerate political reforms that, in other circumstances, would have been put off until later. One is entitled to doubt this optimistic, Chernobyl-style, scenario.
- 59 The Chinese leadership that emerged from the 16th Party Congress and then from the 10th National Party Congress did not propose deep political reforms. Once again, its reforms are administrative and all tend towards improving governance, controlling corruption and strengthening channels for communicating with society and, in particular, with its elites⁵⁴. The election of citizens’ committees (*jumin weiyuanhui*) has already been tried out here and there and is expected to be implemented more generally; but it is not likely to shake the foundations of the system⁵⁵. Separating the administrative powers of decision-making, enforcement and control (*quanli sanfen*), under the direction of Party committees, has been tested out in Shenzhen, with the aim of curbing corruption; but it is not likely to produce any interplay of checks and balances or to make the civil servants less greedy⁵⁶. Thanks to SARS, the media have enjoyed a greater margin for manoeuvre; but this must be seen in the context of newspaper closures and suspensions that were decided shortly before by the same leadership team. Greater transparency has been observed—and was illustrated in April by the unexpected reports on the accidental death of a submarine crew of the Chinese navy—but it was not spontaneous: it was directed and controlled. In other words, the media continue to be called upon to exercise a critical role when and where the leadership asks them to. Hu has showed a willingness to better promote the rights enshrined in the Constitution and open up the election of local state officials⁵⁷. Moreover, some newspapers, apparently protected by Hu Jintao and his allies, have used SARS to ask for more extensive reforms of the political and administrative system⁵⁸. But when, at the beginning of May, Hu restored to favour Jiang’s theory of the “three representations”, it reminded these critics that the Hu-Wen duo does not intend to widen the divisions that have come to light within the Party leadership. Since Hu and Wen took over their posts, we have witnessed what is above all a change of style in communication, and perhaps in governance. This evolution has indeed been speeded up by SARS. But it has not led to other, deeper changes. In short, although one may be entitled, for the reasons put forward earlier, to give the Hu-Wen duo the benefit of the doubt, it has not yet demonstrated its will to introduce any real or serious political reforms.
- 60 For all that, might the hidden power struggle that is being fought out today be transformed into a trial of strength? We may consider that, for the foreseeable future, the answer must remain no. Indeed, the relative weakness of the political disagreements separating the present leaders helps to minimise this risk. And both camps need stability too much to throw themselves into such an adventure. On the one hand, Jiang and his supporters know that it would be difficult for them to push the Party into any break with Hu or even with Wen. As we have seen, knowing that the cost of any change of successor would be too high, Jiang has preferred to surround them, at

the head of the Party and of the government, with a considerable number of his supporters. And they, Zeng in particular, being aware of their unpopularity within the apparatus, have become very discreet about the internal democratisation of the Party, an issue more recently taken up by Hu himself. Conversely, Hu and Wen have not consolidated their powers enough to launch themselves into an attempt to weaken the Jiang faction or, in particular, Zeng's collaborators, who have become a sub-group that will merit closer scrutiny.

- 61 Putting it another way, while Jiang cannot hope in the coming years to replace Hu with Zeng, Hu will again have to show patience and maintain a firm coalition with Wen, the associates of Zhu Rongji and the provincial leaders whom he has promoted⁵⁹. That alone will help him to consolidate his power. The support of the NPC deputies and more widely of the "official elites" will not be enough, although he has worn down the domination of Jiang's supporters and above all cooled their arrogance.

Has the regime become institutionalised?

- 62 The smooth transfer of power from Jiang to Hu, before it was even accomplished, aroused an interesting discussion about whether the Chinese political regime was becoming institutionalised⁶⁰. Did this spring's developments, which we have just briefly examined, help to accelerate this process? Or, on the contrary, is an authoritarian political system still incompatible with institutionalisation?

- 63 Any system of whatever kind will produce its own standards; and the difficulty in China, as elsewhere, is to keep them respected despite the constraints and political interests in play. It is a fact that, in an authoritarian system, these standards are fewer, looser, easier to circumvent and above all non-democratic: co-optation remains the basic mechanism of leaders' selection⁶¹. However, as observers have noticed, the Chinese Party-state does now submit more often to practices and procedures—especially votes and elections—which are regarded, by the regime's leaders themselves, as being quite important. The economic and legal reforms, the openness to the outside world and the profound changes within Chinese society have also obliged the Party's leaders to respect the rules they have set for themselves. And one would be tempted to add that the intensity of the quarrels that are racking them today helps to increase their dependence on these standards.

- 64 But can one conclude that handing over the levers of power, of supreme power in particular, is mainly in obedience to these standards? On the contrary, the way in which the 16th Party Congress unfolded, and the selection of leaders for the Party's "state façade", tend to show that these rules give structure to the balance of forces and to the political struggles being fought—but they do not determine the outcome. Some might be tempted to extend this observation to democracies. Yet, the Chinese people have no choice in the matter and very limited access to the fundamental freedoms written into the Constitution, particularly those who have no connections within the apparatus: their continuing predicament puts the rules into a diminished perspective. The Chinese Communist Party has adapted to the economic and social environment that it has created and in so doing they have been able to postpone any transition towards democracy: that underlines, as Andrew Nathan puts it, authoritarian resilience. It does consult the "elites" more, including the "new elites" that it has promoted into its ranks or the people's congresses; and it allows them more frequently to express their preferences. But, at the same time, the Party has itself become more elitist than formerly; it holds on to the monopoly of selecting—and co-opting—the

country's leaders and "official elites"; and, for the time being, it refuses to open up the political process—and even less the transfer of supreme power—to Chinese citizens as a whole. In winning over large segments of the elites in the aftermath of Tiananmen and especially after 1992, the CCP has achieved a big victory and contributed to substantially prolonging its life expectancy. However, this situation tends to create and feed new tensions between state and society, the elites who are consulted and the rest of the society which is not, the ones who have benefited from the reforms and the others who have not. These tensions may be managed by the new leadership for some time, in particular if Hu and his colleagues eventually decide to address them, and in particular in launching a true political reform package. Nevertheless, at the same time, more and more members of the middle class and even the elites are constantly pushing the limits of authoritarianism, asking for more freedom, transparency, rule of law, accountability and genuine elections, at least at the grassroots level. And one day, these demands will inevitably lead them to raise the question of the one-Party system as a whole. Yes, the CCP has institutionalised some of its rules, but this partial institutionalisation is no passport to eternal stability.

NOTES

1. This year there are more non-communists filling government posts. 30 of them have posts as deputy governor or vice-minister (as against 18 in 1993). *Wenhuibao*, March 5th 2003, p. A5.
2. Jean-Pierre Cabestan, "The Relationship Between the National People's Congress and the State Council in the People's Republic of China: A Few Checks but No Balances", *American Asian Review*, Vol. XIX, No. 3, Autumn 2001, p. 43; cf. also, Jean-Pierre Cabestan, *Le système politique de la Chine populaire*, Paris, PUF, coll. "Thémis", 1994, p. 328.
3. *International Herald Tribune*, March 3rd 2003, p. 4; *Asian Wall Street Journal*, March 5th 2003, p. A4. For a more positive and recent case, cf. the election of academic Wang Liang to the Shenzhen People's Congress in May 2003, *South China Morning Post* (SCMP), May 22nd 2003, p. A4.
4. Data for April 2003, *Wenhuibao*, April 6th 2003, p. A11.
5. *Mingbao*, February 25th 2003, p. A21. According to other sources, the number of private entrepreneurs is no more than 55, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, March 13th 2003, p. 33.
6. Cf. for example, the incidences of vote-buying in Taizhou, Zhejiang, *Mingbao*, April 24th 2003, p. A23.
7. *Ershiyi shiji shijie daobao* (21st Century World Herald), cited by the SCMP, April 21st 2003, p. A5.
8. For an example of a model worker, a miner who is also a delegate in the Provincial Congress of Jiangsu, cf. SCMP, April 21st 2003, p. A5.
9. This year the number of vice-chairmen was reduced from 19 to 15. The Secretary General is now also vice-chairman. The Council of the Presidency of the NPC now has 16 members, as against 21 before.

10. SCMP, March 11th 2003, p. A7.
11. SCMP, March 16th 2003, p. A5.
12. On Wu's popularity, cf. Zong Hairen, *Disidai* (The Fourth Generation), New York, Mirror Press, 2002, p. 178; cf. also, Andrew Nathan & Bruce Gilley eds., *China's New Rulers*, London, Granta Books, 2002, p. 53. Yet, contrary to what Zong foresaw, Wu did not accede as a "consolation prize" to the Chairmanship of the CPPCC but to that of the NPC. As Wen's rival for the post of Premier, Wu saw his chances dwindling after Zhu had given him the impossible job of reforming the state enterprises.
13. *Mingbao*, March 16th 2003, p. A20.
14. SCMP, March 11th 2003, p. A7.
15. Before 1993, the President of the republic was either a member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo (Li Xiannian, 1983-1988) or merely a member of the Politburo (Yang Shangkun, 1988-1993).
16. In particular the *Yomiuri shimbun* and *Zhengming* (Contending), May 2002, pp. 6-8.
17. The worst result ever obtained since the procedure for electing leaders by secret ballot was re-established was in 1998: Han Zhubin, former Railways Minister, was elected Procurator General with a 65% "yes" vote; cf. below.
18. *Mingbao*, March 16th 2003, p. A20. SCMP, March 16th 2003, p. A5. *Zhengming*, April 2003, pp. 10-12.
19. SCMP, May 1st 2003, p. A5.
20. Zong Hairen, *Disidai*, *op. cit.*, p. 16; cf. also Nathan & Gilley, *China's New Rulers*, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-12.
21. *Xinbao*, October 23rd 2002, p. 27. Some analysts consider that this committee is in charge of China's internal security. But the participation within it of several foreign policy specialists, the role it played in handling the incident of the American EP-3 spy plane in April 2001 as well as information gathered on this committee since the 16th Party Congress (cf. below) tend to prove that this committee's field is really that of international affairs.
22. *Wenhuiabao*, March 16th 2003, p. A4; Willy Lam, "China National People's Congress: Popularity and Power", *China Brief*, Vol III, No. 6, March 25th 2003.
23. *Zhengming*, December 2002, pp. 9-11; *Kaifang* (Openness), December, pp. 11-14.
24. According to some opinion polls carried out just after the Congress, 70% of those questioned were opposed to keeping Jiang on as president of the CMC, *Zhengming*, *op.cit.*
25. SCMP, March 16th 2003, p. A5.
26. *China's New Rulers*, *op. cit.*, p.11-12.
27. *Xinbao*, May 19th 2003, p. 11 and May 20th 2003, p. 15.
28. The work report of the Supreme Court was approved by 79.4% of the delegates whereas the work report of the Supreme Procuratorate was approved by 74.6%.
29. It is thought that some delegates (40) placed in the ballot box voting papers that were either blank or inscribed with a different name: indeed, of the 2,935 papers counted, only 2,895 were valid (2,799 "yes", 80 "no" and 16 abstentions). *Mingbao*, March 27th 2003, p. A18.
30. Cheng Li, *China's Leaders. The New Generation*, Lanham, bulder?, Rowman & Littlefield, 2001, pp. 157-159.
31. *Zhengming*, April 2003, p. 11.
32. In early June, it was learnt that Wen Jiabao decided to directly manage financial work. Huang Ju only assists (*xiezhu*) him; *Wenhuiabao*, June 3rd 2003, p. A8.

33. For a period in Shanghai, Hua was Jiang's personal secretary responsible for confidential questions, *Xinbao*, February 27th 2003, p. 25; *SCMP*, March 18th 2003, p. A6. The opposition to the appointment of Hua Jianmin to the post of Secretary General of the State Council was slightly less (83 against with 59 abstentions, which gives 95.16% in support, cf. Table 5). *Ibid*.
34. They say that it was Zeng who promoted him during the 1990s to be deputy director of the Party's Central Department for Organisation, before having him appointed in 2000 as Party secretary in Hebei, *Xinbao*, March 8th 2003, p. 7.
35. Willy Lam, *China Brief*, Vol. III, No. 5; *Xinbao*, February 19th 2003, p. 9.
36. *Xinbao*, February 26th 2003, p. 11.
37. *Strait Times*, December 18th 2002. Willy Lam, *China Brief*, Vol. III, No. 5.
38. Willy Lam, "China National People's Congress", *op.cit*.
39. *Zhengming*, May 2003, pp. 13-15.
40. In the context of preparing for the 16th Congress, each sitting member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo had an important say in the appointment of his successor, by proposing a name (*timing*) to Jiang and to the collective Party leadership, *Xinbao*, November 27th 2002, p. 15.
41. Some delegates admitted that they preferred Li Ruihuan and were "not sufficiently acquainted" with Jia; for all that, however, they did not all vote against Jia, *SCMP*, March 14th 2003, p. A7.
42. *Zhengming*, April 2003, p. 12.
43. *Zhengming*, May 2003, pp. 13-15.
44. The first call that Hu received was from George W Bush on March 19th. Bush congratulated him on being elected, and told him that he was going to liberate Iraq from Saddam Hussein by force.... *SCMP*, April 20th 2003 p. A7.
45. Willy Lam, "China Readies for Future U.S. Fight", *CNN.com*, March 25th 2003.
46. *Xinbao*, May 19th 2003, p. 11 and May 20th 2003, p. 15.
47. The other members of this 9 person leading group are Tang Jiaxuan, Wang Daohan, ARATS chairman, Liu Yandong, Xu Yongyao, Minister of State Security, and Chen Yunlin, Director of the Taiwan Affairs Office; *Lianhebao* (United Daily News, May 29th 2003 in *Mingbao*, May 30th 2003, p. A24 and *Wenhuibao*, May 30th 2003, p. A7. After the 10th NPC it was learnt that Zeng Qinghong had been promoted from general secretary to vice-chairman of the Taiwan leading group; Willy Lam, *op. cit*. Moreover, in April 2003, Wang Gang, member of the Central Secretariat and a close aid of Zeng, played a key role in the organisation of a national meeting on Taiwan, chaired by Jia Qinglin, aimed at commemorating the 10th anniversary of the Wang-Ku talks. The latest report tends to indicate Hu's ability to keep in check Zeng's influence in foreign and security affairs.
48. Willy Lam, *CNN.com*, June 11th 2003.
49. *Xinbao*, November 19th 2002, p. 15.
50. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, November 28th 2002, pp. 28-32.
51. Su Ha, *Zhonggong danei zongguang. Zeng Qinghong de quanli zhi lu* (The grand quartermaster of the CCP. The rise to power of Zeng Qinghong), Hong Kong, Xiafei'er chubanshe, 2002, ch. 10, in particular, pp. 223-239.
52. Li Cheng, "The Emergence of the Fifth Generation in the Provincial Leadership", *China Leadership Monitor*, No. 6, Spring 2003, www.chinaleadershipmonitor.org/20032/lc.pdf

53. The name of the fourth leader to abstain has not been given. *Dongxiang*, (Trend), May 2003, p. 6.
54. Hu's will to enhance the role of the "democratic parties" and to better welcome Chinese who studied or worked abroad underscores this point; cf. *Zhengming*, June 2003, pp. 11-13.
55. In fact, the election of home-owners' committees may have more interesting political implications, cf. Benjamin L. Read, "Democratizing the Neighbourhood? New Private Housing and Home-Owner Self-Organisation in Urban China", *The China Journal*, No. 49, January 2003, pp. 31-59.
56. *Xinbao*, January 20th 2003, p. 22 and February 12th 2003, p. 24, *Mingbao*, March 5th 2003, p. A22.
57. Hu would announce on July 1st 2003 a limited political reform that would permit for the first time more than one candidate to run for the post of city mayor or provincial governor and delegates in the People's Congress, not just the local party committee, to nominate candidates as well; *Washington Post*, June 13th 2003 ; *The Standard*, June 14th 2003, p. A1.
58. In particular the *21 shijie huanqiu baodao* (21st Century World Herald) the publication of which was suspended for a while at the beginning of March, and the *Nanfang dushibao* (Southern Metropolitan News), *SCMP*, May 2nd 2003, p. A5.
59. On Hu's patience, cf. You Ji, "The Heir Apparent", *The China Journal*, No. 48, July 2002, pp. 125-134.
60. Cf. in particular Andrew Nathan's articles, "Authoritarian Resilience" and Bruce Gilley's, "The Limits of Authoritarian Resilience", *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 14, No. 1, January 2003, pp. 6-17 and 18-26.
61. Cf. for example Zeng Qinghong's manoeuvres during the 16th Party Congress to demand that the Standing Committee of the Congress Presidium should allow voting by show of hands for keeping Jiang in the CMC, *Zhengming*, December 2002, *op cit*.